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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Alexandria, Virginia
December 13, 2005

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Beurn Daphne Ferdinand, 35, of Brooklyn, New York, pled guilty today to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. The maximum potential sentence is 32 years imprisonment, and \$1,250,000 in fines. United States District Judge Gerald Bruce Lee set sentencing for March 3, 2006.

From February 2004 through June 2005, Ferdinand conspired with a Care Team Specialist in the Intermediate Care Unit at INOVA Alexandria Hospital in Alexandria, Virginia, to obtain the individually identifiable personal information, including Social Security Numbers, of approximately 100 patients and employees at the hospital. She used the information to open and take over existing credit card accounts, and incur charges on those accounts exceeding \$200,000. Before Ferdinand's arrest in July 2005, she and her accomplice stole and used the information of 44 patients and seven nurses at the hospital. Many of the patients were older than 65 and several are now deceased.

Ferdinand and her accomplice used the credit card accounts to buy various items, including Cartier watches, an Omega watch, jewelry, flat screen television sets, computer equipment, and a Home Theater speaker system. As part of her plea agreement, Ferdinand agreed to forfeit these items to the United States, as well as pay full restitution to the victim merchants and financial institutions.

The case was investigated by the Alexandria City Police and the United States Secret Service, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jack Hanly and Special Assistant United States Attorney Lou Ruffino.

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